

APPLICATION FOR
UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

FOR

APPARATUS FOR EXTRACTING CONCRETE FORMS AND
ELEMENTS RELATED TO CONCRETE FORMWORK

BY

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[01] The present application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Serial No. 10/000,705, filed on October 31, 2001, which claims the benefit of the filing date of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/244,752, filed on October 31, 2000.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[02] The present invention generally relates to construction equipment and more particularly to a device for extracting concrete form work and other concrete installation-related elements.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

10 [03] It is often difficult to remove the form from a concrete structure once the concrete has cured because the concrete becomes mechanically connected with the form material which is typically wood or steel.

[04] U.S. Patent No. 2,099,592 to Barton provides a form puller device having a lever 13, a fulcrum 9, 10, 12, and a J-shaped hook 16 (FIG. 1). The Barton device may be used to engage 15 particular concrete forms 2 having a lip 7 and extracting such forms by exerting force on the lever arm 13. The Barton device, however, is limited in its application as it can engage and extract on a particular type of form (i.e., a form with a lip). Moreover, the Barton device does not provide a

means for extracting other embedded concrete-installation related elements such as rods, posts, and stakes. Furthermore, the Barton device does not provide a lever arm which is versatile in accommodating the comfort and safety of the operator while maximizing the force exerted on the form or installation element.

5 [05] Accordingly, it would be desirable to have a single device which would allow a worker to have a mechanical advantage for: (1) forcing a concrete form – regardless of the type – away from the concrete structure, and (2) extracting embedded concrete-installation related elements – such as rods, posts, and stakes. Furthermore, it would be desirable for such a device to be easily brought to the target location, set up and repositioned each time a new section of the form required removal.

10 Still furthermore, it would be desirable for such a device to have a lever arm which accommodates the safety and comfort of the operator and provides maximum force to facilitate removal of the form or element.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[06] The form puller apparatus of the present invention includes a lever assembly, a fulcrum assembly, and a form pulling assembly. The fulcrum assembly includes a base to provide stability and a vertically oriented member extending upwardly from the base. The lever assembly includes a horizontal member pivotally connected to the top end of the vertically oriented member of the fulcrum assembly. The horizontal member of the lever assembly has two ends -- (1) the first end is rigidly connected to a U shaped handle assembly and (2) the second end is pivotally connected to the form pulling assembly. The form pulling assembly includes a form pulling member having a number of pivot holes spaced along a top portion thereof to allow the form pulling member to be

pivotaly attached to the second end of lever member at various heights along the length thereof and a section of angled stock at the bottom end. The angled stock is arranged perpendicular to the form pulling member for positioning beneath a section of concrete forming material so that the form material can be extracted as needed by pushing down on the handle of the lever when the angle stock
5 is in place.

[07] The form puller apparatus of the present invention further includes at least one embedded element extracting assembly for removing concrete installation-elements such as bars, rods, spikes, posts, and/or poles. These embedded elements are typically shaped such that the angle stock of the form pulling member cannot engage them to facilitate removal. Each embedded element extracting 10 assembly attaches to the form pulling assembly such that the lever assembly may be employed to remove the concrete installation element targeted for extraction.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[08] For a further understanding of the nature and objects of the present invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying 15 drawings, in which like elements are given the same or analogous reference numbers and wherein:

[09] FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of an exemplary embodiment of the concrete form puller of the present invention.

[10] FIG. 2 is an exploded front view of an exemplary embodiment of the concrete form puller of the present invention.

[11] FIG. 3 is an exploded side view of an exemplary embodiment of the concrete form puller of the present invention.

[12] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of an exemplary embodiment of the concrete form puller of the present invention.

5 [13] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of an embedded element extraction assembly of the present invention.

[14] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the concrete form puller of the present invention in use with the first embedded element extraction assembly embodied in FIG. 5.

10 [15] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the embedded element extraction assembly of the present invention.

[16] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the concrete form puller of the present invention in use with the second embedded element extraction assembly embodied in FIG. 7.

15 [17] FIG. 9 is a cross-section view of a chain link of the element receiving chain as used in the second embedded element extraction assembly embodied in FIG. 7, and two top views of the second embedded element extraction assembly embodied in FIG. 7 illustrating the element receiving chain in the first position (run through) and the element receiving chain in the second position (locked).

DESCRIPTION OF SPECIFIC EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[18] A description of certain embodiments of the present invention is provided to facilitate an understanding of the invention. This description is intended to be illustrative and not limiting of the present invention. These and other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will 5 become apparent after a review of the entire detailed description, the disclosed embodiments, and the appended claims. As will be appreciated by one of ordinary skill in the art, many other beneficial results and applications can be appreciated by applying modifications to the invention as disclosed. Such modifications are within the scope of the claims appended hereto.

[19] FIGS. 1-4 show various aspects of an exemplary embodiment of the concrete form puller of 10 the present invention generally designated 10. Concrete form puller 10 includes a lever assembly generally designated 12, a fulcrum assembly generally designated 14, and a form pulling assembly generally designated 16.

[20] Fulcrum assembly 14 includes a stabilizing base 18 from which a vertically oriented fulcrum member 20 extends upwardly. The vertically oriented fulcrum member 20 has a top end 26 having a 15 pivot hole 27 formed therein. While the stabilizing base 18 is shown being circular in shape, it is intended that the base may be shaped in any manner to facilitate stability. Although this embodiment of the concrete form puller of the present invention includes a stabilizing brace 21 to support the vertically oriented fulcrum member 20, it will be appreciated by one having skill in the art that such a brace is unnecessary if the fulcrum member is designed to support the target load 20 alone.

[21] The lever assembly 12 includes a lever arm member 24 pivotally connected at the top end 26 of the vertically oriented fulcrum member 20 by a pivot pin 28 locked in engagement with the pivot hole 27 by a lock 29. The lever arm member 24 has a first end 30 that is rigidly connected to a U shaped handle assembly 32. The lever arm member 24 has a second end 36 that is pivotally connected by a pin 38 and lock 39 to a form pulling member 42 of the form pulling assembly 16 via pin hole 25. The form pulling member 42 is provided with a number of holes 44 to allow the user to adjust the height of a piece of angle stock 50 rigidly attached to the bottom end 52 of the form pulling member 42. The components of the concrete form puller of the present invention may be fabricated from any sturdy material capable of withstanding the operating load including but not limited to steel tubes, bars, and plates.

[22] In operation, the angle stock portion 50 of the form pulling assembly 16 is positioned beneath a section of concrete form material 64 and pulled away from the concrete structure 66 by pushing down on handle assembly 32 causing form pulling member 16 to move in an upward direction freeing the form 64 from the concrete structure 66. The U shaped handle assembly 32 is provided such that the operator can safely apply the required downward force to extract the concrete form while in a comfortable upright position. The operator is not required to bend over at the waist to apply the force thus reducing the risk of back-related injuries. Moreover, the U shaped handle assembly 32 effectively provides two lever arms such that two operators can deliver a higher force if necessary to remove a form.

[23] In another embodiment of the present invention, as shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, the concrete form puller of the present invention includes at least one element extracting assembly 100 for removing various embedded elements related to concrete installation. For example, the element

extracting assembly 100 may facilitate the removal of posts, pins, rods, posts, bars, pegs and/or stakes from the surrounding soil. This embodiment of the element extracting assembly of the present invention includes a body section 105 having a hole 110 formed therein for circumscribing an embedded element 150. The diameter of the hole 110 is selected to be slightly larger than the 5 largest diameter of the embedded element such that the body section 105 can slip over and engage the element. An attaching component 115 – such as a chain – connects the element extracting assembly 100 to the form pulling assembly 16.

[24] In operation, the element extracting assembly 100 is hooked onto the form pulling assembly 16 by a chain 115 via pin 120. The body section 105 of the element extracting assembly 100 is fit 10 around the embedded element 150 via the hole 110. As shown in FIG. 6, when a force is exerted downward against the U shaped handle assembly 32 of the lever arm 24, the form pulling member 42 shifts vertically upward and slightly rotates the element extracting assembly 100 such that the element 150 is wedged by the sides of the hole 110. Once a sufficient force is exerted downward against the U shaped handle assembly 32, the element extracting assembly 100 removes the element 15 150 from its embedded state.

[25] In yet another embodiment of the present invention, as shown in FIGS. 7-9, the concrete form puller of the present invention includes at least one element extracting assembly 200 for removing various embedded elements related to concrete installation. For example, the element extracting assembly 200 may facilitate the removal of posts, pins, rods, posts, bars, pegs and/or stakes from the surrounding soil. This embodiment of the element extracting assembly of the present invention includes a body section 205 having a wedge-shaped recess 210 formed thereon for engaging an embedded element 250 and a keyhole 211 for receiving a chain 212 which is wrapped 20 around the body section 205.

around the element 250 to pull the element into engagement with the recess. The chain 212 may be any conventional chain composed of links 212A, each link having a width W1 and a diameter D1. The keyhole 211 is arranged to receive and lock the chain in place. The keyhole 211 includes two sections. The first section has a diameter W2 which is larger than the width W1 of the chain links 5 212A such that the chain can pass therethrough (first position). The second section has a width D2 which is larger than the diameter D1 of the chain links 212A but smaller than the width W1 of the chain links such that the chain can be locked (second position). An attaching component 215 – such as a second chain – connects the element extracting assembly 200 to the form pulling assembly 16.

[26] In operation, the element extracting assembly 200 is hooked onto the form pulling assembly 10 16 by a chain 215 via pin 120. The first chain 212 is wrapped around the element 250 and run through the first section of the keyhole 211 until the embedded element 250 is pulled firmly into the wedge-shaped recess 210. While the chain 212 is being run through the first section of the keyhole 211, it is in the “first position”. Once the first chain 212 is pulled tight, the first chain is shifted into the second section of the keyhole 211 to lock the element 250 into the recess 210. While the chain 15 212 is locked in the second section of the keyhole 211, it is in the “second position”. When required, the chain 212 may be shifted between the first position and the second position if the chain needs to be tightened and locked respectively. As shown in FIG. 8, when a sufficient force is exerted downward against the U shaped handle assembly 32 of the lever arm 24, the element extracting assembly 200 removes the element 250 from its embedded state.

20 [27] In the specification and appended claims: (1) the term “embedded element” is used to mean “a post”, “a pin”, “a rod”, “a post”, “a bar”, “a peg”, “a stake”, “a spike”, “a pole”, “any vertically oriented element embedded in soil”, and/or “any vertically oriented element related to concrete

installation and embedded in soil”; (2) the term “angle stock” is defined to mean “any structural member having a horizontally flat component for engaging a concrete form from beneath”; (3) the term “attaching component” is used to mean “chain”, “a rope”, “a wire”, a “clip”, and/or “any conventional connecting device”; the term “width” with respect to a chain refers to the dimension 5 “W1” indicated in FIG. 9; and the term “diameter” with respect to a chain refers to the dimension “D1” indicated in FIG. 9.

[28] Although the invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments, this description is not meant to be construed in a limited sense. Various modifications of the disclosed embodiments, as well as alternative embodiments of the invention, will become apparent to persons 10 skilled in the art upon reference to the description of the invention. It is, therefore, contemplated that the appended claims will cover such modifications that fall within the scope of the invention.